



**Herd Creek Allotment**  
**2015 NMFS Annual Report**

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**(1) Overview of proposed action and actual management (livestock numbers, on-off dates for each unit, etc.).**

The 2011 Biological Assessment identified that no more than 215 cow/calf pairs from 6/16 through 10/31 would be grazed on the Herd Creek Allotment under that consultation (we will be re-consulting on this allotment for the 2017 grazing season due to the permit expiring).

See Tables 1, 2, 3, and 4 below for permitted use and authorized use, including authorized livestock numbers, grazing rotation, and actual use for 2015.

The permittees did not follow the grazing rotation identified in their 2015 annual operating instructions (see Table 4 for actual use and item (4)). Because of this change in the grazing rotation, the Lake Basin Unit was rested completely from cattle grazing for 2015. ("Permittees" and "permittee" refer to Jackie or Gary Ingram or both throughout this document.)

**Table 1. Permitted use.**

Permittee	No. and class	Season of use	Head months
Gary and Jackie Ingram	636 cow/calf	6/16 – 10/31	2886

**Table 2. Authorized use for 2015.**

Allotment	No. and class	Season of use	Head months
Herd Creek	215 cow/calf	6/16 – 10/31	975



**Table 3. Unit rotation for 2015.**

Unit	Number	On-date	Off-date	Head months
Taylor-McDonald	215 cow/calf	6/16	8/14 <sup>1</sup>	424
Lake Basin	215 cow/calf	8/15 <sup>1</sup>	10/31	424
Herd Lake	Rest			

<sup>1</sup>Allowed to trail through the Herd Creek crossing once after July 7 and before August 14.

**Table 4. Actual use for 2015.**

Unit	Number	On-Date	Off-Date
Taylor-McDonald	210 cow/calf, 5 bulls	7/9	9/29
Lake Basin	0	Not grazed	
Herd Lake	Rest		

- (2) **Date and location of any specific SCNF implementation monitoring data collected, including monitoring required under Terms and Conditions #1 of the Biological Opinion.**

See Table 5 for dates and locations of implementation monitoring.

- (3) **Results from all implementation and effectiveness monitoring identified as part of the proposed action and the Biological Opinion, including required annual use indicator monitoring (e.g., stubble height, riparian shrub utilization, streambank alteration), photo point monitoring, seral condition, streambank stability, water temperature, sediment, and width to depth ratio.**

See Tables 5 and 6 below for implementation and effectiveness monitoring. The same monitoring site in the Taylor-McDonald Unit was monitored for both implementation and effectiveness on the same day.

**Table 5. End of season monitoring results for 2015 (implementation). All results are rounded to the nearest whole number.**

Unit- Creek Date monitored	Monitoring attribute	Allowed standard	End of season results
Taylor-McDonald Unit- tributary of Taylor Creek  9/10/2015	Greenline stubble	≥ 4"	7"
	Streambank alteration	< 20%	13%
	Woody browse use	30 <sup>A</sup> or 50 <sup>B</sup>	29%
Lake Basin	Not grazed		
Herd Lake	Rest		

<sup>A</sup>Single-stemmed species such as aspen. <sup>B</sup>Multi-stemmed species such as willow and alder.



**Table 6. Effectiveness monitoring.**

Designated monitoring area	Year	Greenline ecological rating	Woody recruitment	Streambank stability
Taylor-McDonald Unit-tributary of Taylor Creek (M289)	2015	77 (late seral)	11% seedlings 41% young 49% mature	100%
	2009	75 (late seral)	61% young and saplings 36% mature	99%

**(4) Discussion of any unauthorized use and/or any maintenance issues related to fences or water developments.**

No unauthorized use and/or maintenance issues related to fences or water developments were documented for 2015.

**(5) Brief review of allotment management and compliance successes and failures.**

**Successes.** The permittee and Forest Service staff together assessed the designated monitoring area in the Taylor-McDonald Unit on September 10, 2015, and monitoring results showed the site to have a late seral ecological condition, high streambank stability, and diverse woody age classes. All annual use standards were also met despite the presence of cattle within the unit beyond the authorized date. Although not scheduled, the Lake Basin Unit received complete rest from grazing.

**Failures.** The permittees did not follow the grazing rotation identified in their 2015 annual operating instructions. The permittees reported on September 9, 2015 that they had missed their move-by date to get cattle across Herd Creek into the Lake Basin Unit prior to August 15, 2015. Rather than trail cattle across Herd Creek after August 15, the permittees elected to keep their cattle in the Taylor-McDonald Unit, but in the northern portion of the unit near Sagebrush and Sheep Creeks. Forest Service staff performed a field inspection on September 10, 2015, and an overview flight of the unit on September 15, 2015, and both trips showed no cattle in the Taylor Creek drainage. The overview flight showed cattle near Sheep Creek. The permittees received a notice of non-compliance, dated January 28, 2016, for failing to follow their authorized grazing rotation.

**(6) Any relevant information that becomes available regarding Snake River Basin steelhead or spring/summer Chinook salmon habitat trends and/or spawning locations that would modify the assumptions made in this Opinion or result in effects not considered.**

No additional information became available in 2015.

**(7) A clear description of compliance with the terms and conditions contained in the Incidental Take Statement (items 1a through 1f and items 2a and 2b in the Biological Opinion, pgs 52-53).**



*1a. The proposed action, including all described conservation measures, monitoring, and adaptive management processes are implemented as described in the Biological Assessment and proposed action section of this Opinion.*

Even though the grazing rotation was not followed and cattle remained in the Taylor-McDonald Unit after the scheduled move-by date, conservation measures and monitoring was followed.

*1b. The extent of incidental take is not exceeded by ensuring streambank alteration levels do not exceed the following levels at any time during each grazing season:*

- (1) 10% in units where streambank stability conditions are less than the identified RMO for that unit.*
- (2) 20% in units where the streambank stability RMO is being met.*
- (3) Appropriately trained SCNF or contract staff will monitor streambank alteration levels, using the same protocols identified in the proposed action, at each unit's DMA.*

The streambank alteration standard was met in the Taylor-McDonald Unit. The Lake Basin Unit was not grazed and so received no alteration impacts from cattle.

*1c. The allotment permittee or their employees receive training to appropriately implement the move triggers identified in the proposed action.*

Yes.

*1d. Annual meetings are conducted with the permittee to discuss specific actions necessary to protect vulnerable stream reaches with the highest potential for degradation of bank condition.*

Multiple meetings occurred with the permittees. These occurred prior, during (FS staff met the permittee in the field), and after the grazing season to discuss the 2015 grazing season.

*1e. Frequent riding is implemented within the allotment to inspect and repair fencelines intended to keep livestock within intended unit boundaries. All exclosures, drift fences, and water developments that reduce cattle use adjacent to streams with ESA-listed fish species are properly maintained and functioning as intended.*

Yes, critical improvements were maintained by the permittees and the permittees rode the allotment twice a week at a minimum while cattle were on the allotment.

*1f. Turnout dates, move triggers, and end-point indicators, as well as responsible parties, are outlined in the grazing permit's annual operating instructions to the permittee.*



Yes.

*2a. The DMA or MIM on each unit that is annually authorized for use is annually monitored to determine compliance with all annual use indicators identified in the proposed action. The report shall also identify any modifications to move-triggers or annual indicators that result from implementing the adaptive management strategy.*

Yes.

*2b. An end-of-year report is available to NMFS.*

Yes, see this report.

**(8) Any management recommendations for subsequent years.**

Forest Service staff and the permittee met after the 2015 grazing season and determined that the grazing rotation for 2016 would include complete rest of the Taylor-McDonald Unit to compensate for the additional use that it received in 2015. This is in line with the grazing rotation schedule identified in the 2011 Biological Assessment.